



***The annual Helen Rodriguez-Trias
Award for Excellence
in Community-Based
Women's Health Leadership***

The Helen Rodriguez-Trias award was established by the California Department of Health Services', Office of Women's Health in 2002 to honor the memory of Dr. Helen Rodriguez-Trias, a founding member of the office's Women's Health Council. Dr. Rodriguez-Trias left a substantial legacy of grassroots activism and leadership in women's health.

The award is presented in May of each year as part of Women's Health Month celebrations. In May 2008 the seventh annual award will be presented.

Helen Rodriguez-Trias, M.D.

Dr. Helen Rodriguez-Trias was a nationally recognized health care advocate for women, particularly minority women. A pediatrician with an expertise in maternal and family health, Dr. Rodriguez-Trias was the first Latina president of the American Public Health Association and in January 2001 was awarded a Presidential Citizen's Medal for her work on behalf of women, children, AIDS patients and the poor.

Dr. Rodriguez-Trias became an outspoken leader in the women's health movement, serving on the boards of the National Women's Health Network and the Boston Women's Health Book Collective. She worked closely with the Committee to End Sterilization Abuse and helped draft what became the federal guidelines regarding sterilization. As medical director of the New York State Department of Health's AIDS Institute in 1988, she helped develop programs directed at families affected by HIV, and continued her work in the area of HIV/AIDS after moving to California.

In 1996, she helped found the Pacific Institute for Women's Health, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit dedicated to improving women's health and well-being. She also worked as a consultant for the International Health Programs Public Health Institute where her focus was improving family planning and health care in South and Central America. Her most recent work for the organization involved identifying and enlisting local leaders for reproductive health programs in countries including El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico, and ensuring that underserved populations, especially rural Indians, were not forgotten. She was a mentor to many health care providers, brilliant, loving, and never gave up the fight. She left an enormous legacy.